

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please rewrite the paragraph at page 12, line 1, as follows:

Referring specifically to Figs. 3 and 4, according to a further preferred aspect of the invention, the plate 102 is provided with body alignment holes 150, proximal head alignment holes 152a, 152b, 152c (generally 152), and a distal head alignment hole 154, each sized to closely accept standard Kirschner wires (K-wires), e.g., 0.7 – 1.2 mm in diameter. All the alignment holes 150, 152, 154 are substantially smaller in diameter (e.g., by thirty to fifty percent) than the shafts of screws 104 (approximately 3.15 mm in diameter) and the shafts of pegs 106, 108 (approximately 2.25 mm in diameter). The body alignment holes 150 are longitudinally displaced along the body portion 116 and provided at an oblique angle (preferably approximately 70°, as shown in Fig. 5) relative to the lower surface 158 of the body portion 116. The proximal head alignment holes 152 alternate with the peg holes 134. In the embodiment shown, for n peg holes 134 (e.g., four) in said first set, a substantially linear arrangement of n-1 proximal head alignment holes (i.e., three) is provided. A tangent line H to the distalmost points of the head alignment holes 152 is preferably substantially coincident or closely parallel with a line tangent to points on the circumferences of the shafts of pegs 106 inserted through holes 134 adjacent the head portion 118 of the plate 102. The tangent line H is not distally displaced relative to a tangent line defined along distalmost points of two adjacent peg holes. With respect to the proximal head alignment holes, it is appreciated that a shaft 106a of a peg is generally smaller in diameter than a head 106b of a peg (Fig. 6). Thus, a line tangent to the peg holes 134 (each sized for receiving the head 106b of peg 106) will be closely located, but parallel, to a line tangent to a distalmost point on the

respective alignment hole 152. Nevertheless, for purposes of the claims, both (i) a tangent line which is preferably substantially coincident with a line tangent to points on the circumferences of the shafts of pegs and (ii) a tangent line to a set of peg holes shall be considered to be “substantially coincident” with a line tangent to a distalmost point of an alignment hole 152. Axes through alignment holes 152 preferably generally approximate (within, e.g., 3°) the angle of an axis of an adjacent peg hole 134. Distal head alignment hole 154 is provided between the central and radial-side peg holes 138, and has a circular upper opening, and a laterally oblong lower opening, as shown best in Fig. 6.